

Obtaining a Marriage License in Massachusetts

The Commonwealth of Massachusetts requires that a marriage license be obtained by the couple planning to be married. This requirement is applicable to both residents and non-residents of the Commonwealth seeking to be married in the Commonwealth.

Application Process:

Requirements:

The laws governing marriage in the Commonwealth of Massachusetts requires that both parties of the proposed marriage must apply in person to any city or town clerk in the Commonwealth. Once you have filed 'intentions to marry,' a marriage license is issued. The marriage license is valid for 60 days and can be used anywhere within the Commonwealth of Massachusetts. It is not valid outside of the Commonwealth.

Waiting Period:

There is a three day waiting period. Although the day of application is not counted, Sundays and holidays are included. A waiver of this three day waiting period requirement can be obtained by applying to a judge of a probate or district court to have the license issued without delay. Upon review, the court may issue a certificate allowing the marriage to be performed without delay and not bound by the three day waiting period requirement.

Cost of License:

The current fee for a marriage license is \$40.00

Age Requirement:

Both parties must be 18 years of age or older. For an individual under the age of 18 to marry requires a court order from a probate or district court where the minor resides.

Medical Certificates:

As of January 28, 2005, the Commonwealth of Massachusetts does not require medical certificates. On October 29, 2004, the Governor signed into law Chapter 388 of the Acts of 2004, formally known as House Bill 75. This law repeals section 28 of c.207 M.G.L., eliminating the premarital medical certificate requirement for marriage in the Commonwealth of Massachusetts.

Witnesses to Ceremony:

The Commonwealth of Massachusetts does not require witnesses to be present at your ceremony.

Certification:

Any recognized, and registered with the Commonwealth of Massachusetts, member of the Clergy, a Justice of the Peace, or an individual who has made application to the Commonwealth for one time officiant status can perform a marriage in the Commonwealth of Massachusetts. Apply through <http://www.mass.gov/governor/docs/one-day-marriage-designation.pdf> for the application form.

Once the marriage ceremony is completed the officiant (Clergy, Justice of the Peace, or registered layperson) is required to sign the marriage license and return it to the clerk of the issuing city or town. Be certain the license is signed in **BLACK INK ONLY**.

The officiant is not allowed to provide a copy of the marriage license to the couple. Copies of the marriage license can be obtained by contacting the office of the Secretary of State.

To obtain a *Certified Marriage Certificate* from the Commonwealth of Massachusetts, an application form is available at:

http://www.mass-doc.com/massachusetts_marriage_certificates.htm